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ELECTION 2022 COVERAGE ON A2

County to form mental health board

KENNEDY KALVODA
News Reporter | @KKalvoda1

Problems with mental health such as anxiety, depression and drug abuse have skyrocketed in the U.S. since the start of the pandemic in 2020. Five counties in northwest Missouri plan to aid these problems in their communities by joining together to create a mental health co-op.

Nodaway County, Gentry County, Atchison County, Holt County and Worth County will be creating the Northwest Missouri Cooperative Mental Health Board of Trustees. This will consist of a board from each county to facilitate, coordinate and fund a sustaining mental health program.

This was brought forward by the 4th Judicial Circuit Leadership Team on Mental Health and Criminal Justice, led by Associate Circuit Judge for Nodaway County Robert Rice. This leadership team was created in late 2020 in order to help address gaps in mental health resources across the region of northwest Missouri. Members of the leadership team come from various career fields, including health, law enforcement and judicial organizations.

The reasoning behind this proposal is that many people in the region were not able to get the care they needed in their own communities. Some people have to travel to St. Joseph and Kansas City to get treatment.

"Our goal is to obtain additional mental health resources to handle the public health crisis that we're facing with mental health issues in northwest Missouri," Rice said.

Each county that participates will be able to nominate board members to participate, with seven from Nodaway County, one from Worth County, and two each from Atchison, Gentry and Holt counties. These numbers are based on the population of each of the counties, with the counties with higher populations having more representatives and the ones with lower populations having less.

Of the five counties, four had signed on to an initial agreement that would have created the board, but the Atchison County Commission didn't initially agree with the plan after expressing concern over the representation on the board and the potential financial obligation involved.

It was officially approved when Atchison County was brought back in on March 22. The county came back into the fold after the number of board members from the county was increased from one member to two members in order to address the county's concerns about board representation.

SEE HEALTH | A4

JASINSKI OUT



ADDALYNN BRADBURY PHOTO EDITOR

Northwest President John Jasinski stands at the fall 2021 commencement ceremony. Jasinski, who has served as president since 2009, was notified earlier this month that the Board of Regents would not be renewing his contract.

Reason for Regents' decision to not renew NW President's contract still unknown



NATHAN ENGLISH
Managing Editor | @nathan_3nglish

ADDALYNN BRADBURY PHOTO EDITOR
Regent John Moore, a member of the Board of Regents, discusses raising student employee wages, which was approved after a 5-2 vote March 17.

Northwest will have a new person at the helm for the first time in 13 years.

President John Jasinski announced April 1 via an "All That Jazz" email that he and Northwest will be parting ways after the University's

Board of Regents decided not to renew his contract. Jasinski will vacate the position June 30, when his contract expires.

No record of a vote on the issue by the Northwest Board of Regents has been made available at this time.

Two years ago, Jasinski had one year left on his contract. Regents voted to void the final year and replace it with a two-year contract. Regent Chair John Moore said Jasinski was told at the time that it would be his last extension.

The Northwest president declined to comment outside of his previous statement.

Jasinski's departure is not due to performance issues, the president said in his email, which the Regent chair later confirmed.

"Since we let John know this two years ago, we have worked with him to try and accomplish his career desires," Moore said. "In that process, it's been a good discussion — good, healthy conversations have taken place."

Jasinski was a finalist for Minnesota State University-Mankato's presidential position last year before withdrawing his name for consideration.

"It is appropriate for me to explore new horizons at this time, as I am quite optimistic about where Northwest is at in its life cycle," Jasinski said in a February 2021 press release after it was announced he was a candidate for the position.

No reason was given for Jasinski's withdrawal from

SEE JASINSKI | A4

\$73 million

raised in donations during Jasinski's tenure as president. Around \$55 million came from the Forever Green campaign

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★★★ ELECTION 2022

Parsons elected to new Council term, 'humbled' by results



SIDNEY LOWRY NEWS EDITOR

Tye Parsons won reelection to the City Council with 558 votes in the April 5 municipal election.

SIDNEY LOWRY
News Editor | @ sidney_lowry

Nodaway County municipal election polls closed at 7 p.m. April 5, concluding the last few months of campaigning for candidates all across the county. Nearly two hours later, the unofficial results of the election named the people who will be sitting in office.

Maryville City Councilman Tye Parsons' term was coming to an end, and two candidates were running for the open spot. Parsons was running for reelection with Bryan Williams as his opponent. Of the 1,071 votes cast, Parsons won the election, coming in with just over 52% at 558 votes, while Williams had slightly under 48% with 513.

This will be the second term Parsons will sit on the Council. During his first three years, he helped with projects such as the additions made to help with water quality issues, the South Main Corridor Improvement Project, the opening of Thomson Splash 'N' Play Park, the opening of Keith Woods Public Safety Building, increasing police pay and more.

"I'm really honored and humbled that the citizens decided to give me another shot and gave me another three years on the City Council," Parsons said. "The city has a tremendous amount of momentum right now that we've accomplished some great things in the past three years, and we have some really big projects in the future. And so I'm just really excited to be a part of that."

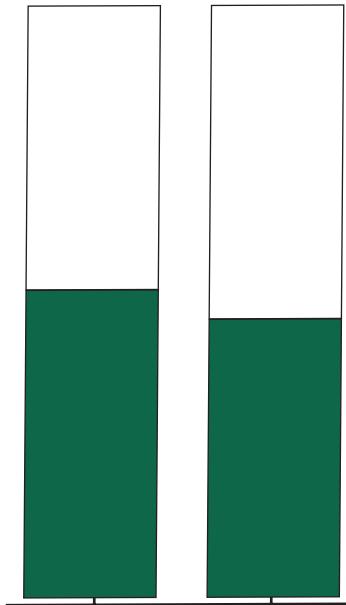
Alongside the candidates for City Council and Maryville R-II School Board, Maryville residents were asked if they wanted to pass a 1/4% tax to go to Maryville Parks and Recreation. Of the 1,091 votes, just under 66% voted in favor of passing the sales tax.

This sales tax will go to help make repairs to the 80% of parks that are currently not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act so those parks become compliant. The tax will also help fund repairs to the Maryville Community Center, the Aquatic Center and parking lots at the parks around town.

"It's a credit to the community that value their parks and recreation services that we provide, and the facilities, and we're looking forward to continuing the service that we've provided in the past and improving the facilities and making the needed upgrades that are needed," Maryville Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Stubblefield said.

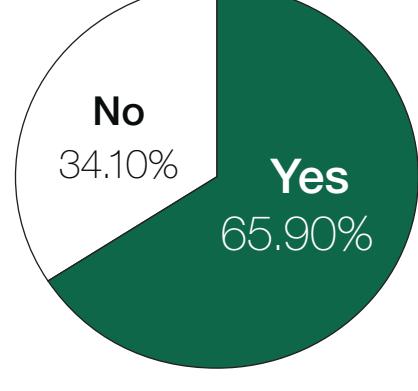
Unofficial Results for Maryville City Council

558 / 1,071 votes 513 / 1,071 votes



William Tye Parsons Bryan Gerald Williams

Should Maryville impose a 1/4 percent sales tax to benefit local parks and capital improvements?



Results will be unofficial until military absentee ballots are counted April 8



KENDRICK CALFEE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Josh McKim sits at his desk at Nodaway County Economic Development. McKim was elected for a third term on the Maryville R-II School Board April 5.



NATHAN ENGLISH MANAGING EDITOR

Mitch Coffelt secured a seat on the Maryville R-II School Board, garnering nearly 34% of the vote.

McKim, Coffelt to fill School Board seats

as it was the first in which the position was contested.

"This is my first time running as far as actually having go through the election process because nobody else ran the previous time, so I kind of reflected on it, and it really is quite humbling. And I'm quite honored that it's humbling that people

would put their trust in me to try to step up and be part of the School Board," McKim said. "I'm excited and blessed."

During his most recent term, McKim helped the School Board navigate COVID-19 precautions and mitigation measures. Now that he has been elected to the Board, he said he wants to make

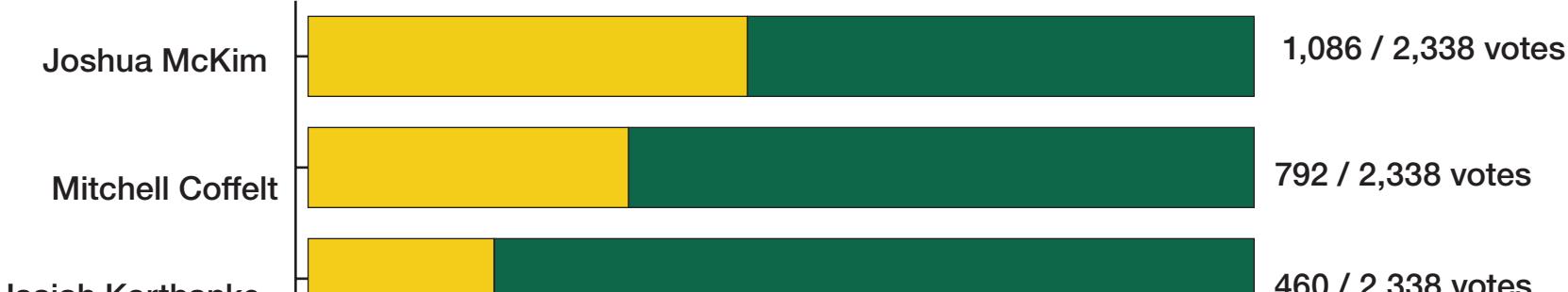
sure teachers are more prepared for online learning, and he wants to help come up with systems that would improve the education quality for students if they did have to move online.

Coffelt was elected to the second seat of the Board. He currently sits on the Maryville Parks and Recreation Board and is a part of The Bridge Church and the St. Joseph Chamber Circle of Influence.

"I am humbled by all the support and encouragement," Coffelt said. "I am excited for the opportunity to serve."

On the Board, Coffelt wants to focus on listening to what the community has to say and finding quality applicants to help bring good teachers to the district.

Unofficial Results for Maryville R-II School Board



Results will be unofficial until military absentee ballots are counted April 8

Senate voting continues in contested election



SILVIA ALBERTI PHOTOGRAPHER

Northwest student Darren Ross Jr., co-president of the Minority Men's Organization, gives a presentation about the "Tribute to Women" event during the Student Senate meeting April 5 in the J.W Jones Student Union Boardroom.

CRIME LOG

for the week of April 7

Northwest Missouri State University Police Department

March 31

There is a closed investigation for a fire alarm in Tower Suites West.

There is an open investigation for identity theft.

There is a closed investigation for a fire alarm in Dieterich Hall.

March 30

There is a closed investigation for a fire alarm in Hudson Hall.

There was an accident between **Ali B. Trosper** and **Meredith M. Riddle** in Parking Lot 38.

There is a closed investigation for a fire alarm in South Complex.

Maryville Police Department

April 4

There is an ongoing investigation for counterfeit money on the 300 block of North Market Street.

A summons was issued to **Gregory L. Brumley**, 44, for a city code violation on the 100 block of South Buchanan Street.

April 2

There was an accident between an unknown driver and **Jerrald Butts** on the 1600 block of South Main Street.

A debit card was recovered on the 500 block of South Main Street.

There is an ongoing investigation for burglary on the 300 block of East Summit Drive.

March 31

There was an accident between an unknown driver and **Victor Coulter** on the 200 block of West Second Street.

March 30

There was an accident between **Tanner B. Derks**, 20, and **Leta M. Stickelman**, 27, on the 1500 block of North Main Street.

There is an ongoing investigation for counterfeit money on the 1500 block of South Main Street.

There is an ongoing investigation for suspicious circumstances on the 1500 block of South Main Street.

March 29

There is an ongoing investigation for property damage on the 700 block of East Third Street.

A summons was issued to **Heather M. Stallard**, 37, for not having a valid driver's license, failure to maintain financial responsibility and failure to register a motor vehicle on the 1700 block of East First Street.

March 27

There is an ongoing investigation for disorderly conduct on the 200 block of Volunteer Avenue.

HEALTH

CONTINUED FROM A1

"I think any time you can combine resources and get more people on the boat to row the boat, the further you'll go. Could we do something just in Nodaway County? Sure. But could we do more if we included Holt, Worth, Atchison and Gentry? In my opinion, absolutely, and it's worth it in order to combine our resources and to add to our strength by including as many as possible," Rice said.

This process will occur in two

different phases. Phase one will involve the implementation of a grant, while phase two will be for implementing long-term mental health services.

Megan Jennings, director of development for the St. Francis Foundation, said Mosaic Medical Center - Maryville has done a community health needs assessment for about a decade, and mental health has been number one in community health needs in recent years.

"We need every county involved," Jennings said. "This is everyone's problem to solve. It's going to take all of us coming together to build solutions for change."

Jennings said she thinks Rice's presentations have brought about a greater awareness of the problems these five counties are facing.

"(The mental health co-op) gives everybody a lifeline and support, especially our rural communities and school districts. This is across the board an opportunity for everyone and even the smallest counties to have a voice and to be able to bring real, meaningful solutions to their communities," Jennings said.

Jennings commended the

work Rice has done so far with bringing this initiative to the forefront and giving smaller counties a seat at the table throughout the process.

"It's not always typical that someone in the judicial system would really recognize that it's a preventative care model that really helps create that change," Jennings said. "It's not only providing resources now; it's creating a region where mental health is on the forefront of our minds. It becomes about the help for the now, but it becomes about changing the trajectory for the future as well."

ADDALYNN BRADBURY PHOTO EDITOR
President John Jasinski announced April 1 via an "All That Jazz" email that he and Northwest will be parting ways after the University's Board of Regents decided not to renew his contract. Jasinski will vacate the position June 30.

JASINSKI

CONTINUED FROM A1

The rumor of Jasinski's inevitable departure after this year was an open one in the Northwest community. Many speculated a rift had formed between the president and the Board.

Shortly after COVID-19 first struck the U.S., forcing Northwest to move online, the administration decided to relocate remaining on-campus students to Forest Village. Regents Moore and Jason Klindt, R-Kearney, Missouri, took issue with the Board not being consulted before the housing decision was made.

"I'm stunned that the Board played no role in this other than to get after-the-fact emails," Klindt said in a March 2020 interview with the Missourian. "Even on an informal basis, it seems to me that it would have been best practice to at least ... we really should have been included — I'm not saying we needed a vote to do any of those things, but I think we really need to think about that, that we should have been a part of that judgment."

Moore suggested at the time there should be a more formal granting of regency powers to Jasinski in times of emergency. Marilou Joyner, Regent chair at the time, disagreed with Moore and Klindt, affirming the administration's decision-making process.

Those rift suspicions were all but confirmed by the tone of the latest edition of "All That Jazz," one in which the president listed the many accomplishments and achievements at Northwest during his tenure as president before asking community members to "look critically" at the Regents.

"Understand the innerworkings and ties to others, discern the intended direction, ascertain support or lack thereof for critical issues and weigh in on the institution's future," Jasinski said. "Civility with accountability are words that come to mind as you do so."

Jasinski has served as the University's president since 2009. During that time, Northwest saw record enrollment and retention rates. Jasinski spearheaded the Forever Green campaign at Northwest, which raised \$55 million in donations, resulting in the construction of the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse and the Agricultural Learning Center. The president raised a total of \$73 million in donations during his tenure.

"Our results are unquestioned," Jasinski said in his statement. "We neither gloat nor take our performance for granted, as it comes through sweat and toil, tough decisions and leading from a position of strength — amid a currently divisive society."

The decision created a large uproar from students, faculty and alumni of Northwest, with many taking to social media to voice their displeasure at the Board's decision. Tracy Steele, a 1993 graduate of Northwest, wrote a letter calling for transparency from the Board on why the decision not to renew Jasinski's contract was made.

Thus far, the letter has been circulating on numerous Northwest social media groups and was sent to each of the Regents via email. It has garnered well over 100 signatures at the time of publication.

"As for the Bearcat community, I would tell them that the members of the board share their passion for the university and its success," Moore said in an email to the Missourian earlier this week. "The regents may not always agree with one another or with some members of the community about a given issue, but I know each board member is driven by what they feel is in the best interests of the university."

At the end of his statement, Jasinski said he and his wife, Denise, will be "patient" as they move into their new phase in life.

"On behalf of Mrs. J, I offer our gratitude, love and best wishes," Jasinski said.

In the next couple of weeks, Moore said, the Board will be naming an interim president, who will be at the helm of Northwest for the next school year while the Board finds a permanent replacement. The Board has not completed the process of finding the interim president.

Moore said the Board doesn't have specific criteria for the interim or next permanent president. He said he hopes they are "good listeners to all of Northwest's constituents," and have a unifying ability.

The search for the next permanent president will begin in the fall.

Moore said he and Jasinski had some discussions about another extension, but the two were never able to come to an agreement.

"We've had a lot of wonderful accomplishments, and I think the University is in a good spot in part to the leadership that John has provided to it," Moore said.

KENNEDY KALVODA
News Reporter | @KKalvoda1

Student Senate was in the midst of its election week for its first meeting of April.

Ballots were officially made available April 4 on Catpaws; voting ends April 8.

Senate discussed the approval of new additions to its bylaws. These changes will amend the role the Internal Relations Committee has in Senate and will have the committee working more closely with the Senate Executive Board.

The Internal Relations Committee helps student organizations take all of the steps required to become an official organization on campus, and serves as a middle man for the organizations and the rest of the Senate. This new bylaw will allow for members of this committee to assist the Executive Board with finding and appointing new Senate members when there are open positions.

Senate made another change to its bylaws at the meeting. Graduate students will now have a dedicated representative on Senate.

Senate also fulfilled its primary function at its April 5 meeting, giving a total of \$5,312.52 in appropriations and a charitable donation to several organizations.

The Collegiate Farm Bureau requested a \$1,500 appropriation to fund its "Kids' Farmer's Market" at the Leet Center from 1-3 p.m. April 23.

President of Collegiate Farm Bradlie Wilmes said this event is important to have on campus in order to have kids learn about farming and agriculture.

"Having an event exposing children in our community to the farm and agriculture in general is important because young exposure helps them learn about something that is a staple in our

society and about where their food comes from," Wilmes said.

The funds cover various expenses, including expenses for rental vans, thank-you gifts for vendors and drivers, renting out the Agricultural Learning Center, and gift bags for the kids who attend. The appropriation passed unanimously.

Northwest Student Veterans Association requested a \$640 appropriation fund for its "Land of the Mindful" barbecue, which will be 11 a.m.-1 p.m. April 13 in front of the J.W. Jones Student Union. This event will be an opportunity for the campus community to discuss various aspects of mental health. This appropriation was passed unanimously.

The Minority Men's Organization requested \$1,758.90 to fund its "Tribute to Women" event, which will be April 6. The original appropriation was for \$1,271.20, but due to the high RSVP numbers, more food was needed and the requested number was changed. Senate voted unanimously to amend the amount and appropriate the new number.

Alpha Sigma Alpha requested a charitable donation of \$1,413.62 for its annual Special Olympics House of Pancakes, which will be held from 5-7 p.m. April 6. The amount was originally \$790 but was changed to \$1,413.62 due to catering costs. This donation would cover the costs of renting a tent and tables and to pay for Chris Cakes, the event's caterer. Senate voted unanimously to amend the amount and appropriate the new funds.

"It gets everybody involved with each other. Everybody gets to hang out with people that they don't usually hang out with, and they get to raise money for a good cause," Alpha Sigma Alpha member Jenna King said.

A SEXUAL VIOLENCE AWARENESS PROJECT

"LETTERS FROM..."



CONTINUING THE "LETTERS FROM..." PROJECT

The "Letters from..." project was created in partnership with the Northwest Missouri Editorial Board, Northwest Wellness Services and North Star Advocacy Center, and will be a part of the Opinion section. The series started with the March 24 issue and will run throughout the month of April for Sexual Assault Awareness Month. A portion of submitted letters will be published in print, and all eligible letters during the length of the series will be published at nwmissourinews.com.

The project's purpose is to give a platform for survivors of sexual assault to share their stories anonymously. The letters are a series of first-hand accounts of consent and sexual violence from Northwest students.

Through this project, survivors are encouraged to be as open and honest with their stories as they wish.

Survivors wishing to share their stories can submit letters to lettersfrom00@gmail.com. We ask that submissions are free of names, quotes that could link directly to an individual, or calls to action that could harm oneself or others. Letters will be edited for grammar and AP style. If your letter does not meet the criteria initially, feel free to resubmit with edits.

The Editorial Board, Wellness Services and North Star will not share any confidential information with any outside sources.

THE FOLLOWING IS AN ACCOUNT FROM VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE, WHICH MAY CONTAIN TRIGGERS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED SIMILAR ATROCITIES. THEIR STORIES OF SURVIVAL AND BATTING STIGMAS REMAIN ANONYMOUS. IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW HAS EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE, PLEASE REACH OUT TO THE RESOURCES LISTED ON THIS PAGE.

FROM: ANONYMOUS

In August, I was assaulted in my room, not two weeks from moving here. It started consensually, but I started saying "stop" and he didn't, not for several minutes. He told people investigating that he couldn't hear me, but I know this to be untrue because he was responding, saying "Just another minute" and "I'm almost done, I promise." It took damn near half a dozen tries of me telling him to stop and trying to push him off for him to get the message. He was defended by those in power. I was told not to say, but someone in charge said that he thought the guy might have hearing issues despite his face being less than a foot from mine. He said that since the guy was so apologetic afterward, that it must not have been sexual assault. That maybe my memory of how many times I said stop was faulty because I was "so emotional." He convinced me to agree to what the guy said since I didn't have any proof and he didn't want to go to court over it. Was there malicious intent? No. Does that take away from the fact that it's still sexual assault, no matter if it was planned or not? Also no.



FROM: ANONYMOUS

I was at a party at a house that I trusted, not wearing anything super provocative, just having a good time with my friends. The music was loud, the drinks were too good, and I was very intoxicated.

A group of boys came to the party, and the guy in the white shirt stood out to me. I told my friend that I thought he was cute, but she told me to go sit down because I was very drunk. Soon he came over to me and asked my name and I told him, and he gave me his name but I never remembered. He asked me, "Do you want to have sex?" I laughed out loud and replied, "Of course not. I'm way to drunk to be having sex." He then asked me

to go upstairs with him where it was quieter, so he brought me to someone's room, and that's where things escalated.

I don't remember how things happened, but I ended up with my clothes off, being taken advantage of, and one of the house owners walked in on it happening. They proceeded to yell and kick us out. I told one of them what actually happened, and they protected me and kicked everyone else out.

Later, the house owner came up to me and said, "I want to believe you, but that story is way too overused," which made me really understand that not everyone is raised the same. I would never doubt someone's story.

FROM: ANONYMOUS

When you enter Northwest as a freshman, you are required to attend "Can I Kiss You?" The annual presentation gives students knowledge and information about consent. It just seems that although we are required to attend it, the words from the speaker go in one ear and out the other for some people.

I remember attending the presentation and thinking to myself, "No way we are learning about what the word 'no' means."

Not even two weeks later, I found myself face-to-face with a person who didn't respect the word no. Not even two weeks into college, I became the girl who they were talking about in the presentation.

I, to this day, cannot recall how I met this man, but I remember how "obsessed" he was with me. Within the span of three days, he was tracking my phone, constantly showing

up to my dorm room without invitation, constantly texting me and wanting to know what I was doing.

He didn't live in my building but would find ways to get in the building without having to let him in. I didn't feel safe. There was no way I could avoid him because even when I tried, he showed up at my door.

I used to not be the type to lock my door. I left it open for the other girls in my pod because we all became really good friends. That changed within an instant. My door was almost never unlocked after I met him.

On day two of "knowing" this guy, he showed up at my door, violently banging on the door. When I opened it, he barged through the door and sat in my desk chair. I was baffled; I had never met such a blatant man in my life. He told me the day before that he had anger issues, so I was scared to upset him.

I sat on my bed and tried having a civil conversation with him. But

the next thing I knew, he was on top of me. He was holding me down, touching me while I flailed around my bed. He forced my body to turn over, and I knew in that moment that I couldn't stop him.

After begging and pleading for him to stop, there was a moment when I lost all the emotions inside of me. I laid there with a tear rolling down my face, staring at the wall while the will to live escaped my body.

When he was finished with me, I just laid there like a dead body. I didn't move, I didn't talk, I just laid on my stomach, staring at the wall.

He asked me what my issue was, why I wasn't moving. The answer was clear in my head. I had just been raped in my own bed, but I couldn't say that to him and I didn't want to admit it. I pulled it together, caught my breath from a panic attack and sat up.

I told him that I needed to do homework and that I needed him to leave. He kissed me and told me that

he would talk to me later.

When I shut the door, I fell to the floor. I couldn't breathe. I thought I was dying. I couldn't feel my body, and my heart felt like it had stopped beating.

In that moment, I became a victim of sexual assault.

I no longer like to use that phrase. I have been labeled many things after it happened, but three years later, I don't call myself a victim, I call myself a survivor.

If there is one piece of advice I can give to anyone who has not gone through anything like this, it is just to listen and support. For most, if not all, people, this is something that they carry with them to the end of the day. You have to be patient, be there and respect the choices we make because we have been scarred by what happened. Our lives were changed in a matter of minutes, and the least we could ask for is someone to be there for us while we are in pain.

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We publish letters from readers for free. All letters become the property of the Northwest Missourian, which reserves the right to edit them. Letters should include your name, address and telephone number.

Letters should be between 150 and 300 words and sent to k.calfee@missourian@gmail.com.



KENDRICK CALFEE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Jesus Gonzalez walks past the Spoofhounds' bench following a Pleasant Hill goal April 6. The 'Hounds fell 4-2 against the Chicks.

HOUNDS CONTINUED FROM A8

"Mistakes happen, plus Pleasant Hill is pretty good," Swink said. "Things are gonna happen. I knew that, so I tried to keep everyone's head up."

While the first half was a constant back-and-forth, Maryville put the pressure on Pleasant Hill in the second half, keeping the ball on the Chicks' side of the field and putting up multiple shot attempts.

Kurz ran up from her forward position on the right side of the field. She looked down at the ball before launching it past Abney's fingertips for a second time. The game was tied 2-2 with 27 minutes left in regulation.

"I just get down there, try to stay on my side and just see the goal," Kurz said.

With the game tied once more, the match resumed its usual back-and-forth pace.

Tolson said even with a slower tempo, he was proud of the way the players performed during those scoreless stretches.

"We controlled the ball and created a lot of chances," Tolson said.

After roughly 18 minutes of neither team being able to generate much offense, the gears began to turn again for Pleasant Hill. After a bad throw on the inbounds by Maryville, the Chicks once again

raced the ball down the field. With the rest of the Spoofhounds trying to catch up, all that was standing in the way of Maryville going down 3-2 was Swink.

The ball bounced toward Swink, who dove for the save. It bounced right by her fingertips and into the net to give Pleasant Hill the 3-2 lead with 8:53 left in regulation.

The Chicks scored once more to go up 4-2 with just over six minutes to go, effectively shutting down any attempt at a comeback for the 'Hounds and marking Maryville's second loss of the season.

"I think we learned we're capable of a lot," Kurz said. "I think that's just part of the process — you lose — and that's going to help us later on."

Now at .500 on the season, the Spoofhounds will once again have one day off before returning to the Hound Pound for a match against Bishop LeBlond (4-1).

Tolson said he expects a tough match against LeBlond and that these tough games to start the season are all part of the plan.

"We don't learn anything from beating teams 8-0," Tolson said. "We're getting better every game playing teams like Pleasant Hill, and we're learning more about what we need."

DECISIONS CONTINUED FROM A8

"I've always loved college towns. The only thing that would ever attract that is something similar on a considerably bigger scale."

While McCollum is planning on a return, plans change. There is, of course, no telling when that "can't-turn-down" opportunity might come his way.

Should he stick around, it might do more than just write the next chapter of his future MIAA Hall of Fame story. It might keep one of Bearcat Nation's favorites in the green and white for another season, too.

Diego Bernard, a fourth-year junior guard, has one season of eligibility remaining due to COVID-19 impacting the 2020-21 season, but he's not quite sure what he's doing with it yet.

Bernard and McCollum will sit down in the latter half of the week to determine what their future together holds.

"We'll probably talk about that to see what he's doing too," Bernard said. "After this week, going into next week, I'll definitely have a decision, for sure."

While the Northwest faithful

might get to hold onto McCollum for at least one more season, and perhaps get to witness Bernard's last ride in the process, they'll have to bid adieu to Trevor or Hudgins. The fifth-year junior is in a similar eligibility predicament as Bernard. But Hudgins, however, has no plans on coming back.

Instead, he'll sign with an agent sooner rather than later, and that will help him prepare for the 2022 NBA Draft while effectively discarding that final year of eligibility.

"I've been in college for 100 years now," Hudgins said with a smirk. "I'm just ready, you know? I'm ready to graduate,

ready to get out of here. ... I love this place, but life goes on. I'm just ready to make some money."

Hudgins put together a farewell tour for the ages this season. He was named a three-time MIAA Player of the Year, the MIAA Tournament MVP, the Central Region Tournament MVP, the Elite Eight MVP, only the fourth person to ever win back-to-back NABC Division II Player of the Year awards and the Bevo Francis Award winner.

That resume, of course, put Hudgins in a position to have options to go elsewhere.

"The only chance I would've went to another school or transferred after this year is if COVID hit again or, God forbid, an injury," Hudgins said. "Then, probably, I would've went somewhere else. ... I could've went somewhere if I really wanted to, but I'm just focused on the next step."

Hudgins will now prepare for the Portsmouth Invitational Tournament, a four-day event that includes 64 of the best seniors that college basketball has to offer at the end of every season. All 30 NBA teams will have representatives in attendance, allowing Hudgins — the first Division II participant since 2012 — to showcase his talents against stern competition.

As for McCollum and Bernard, they'll use the oncoming days to reflect on the last four years and decide whether or not they'll be together for a fifth. Should the pair have one final campaign, it'll allow the program to try for its fifth title in the last six opportunities.

"I don't think people realize, including myself, realize what has been accomplished," McCollum said. "I'm not sure people understand how incredibly dominant that group was for the last four seasons, specifically this season, when they lost an All-Big East player and were still able to come through."

17-0

is the trio's record together in the NCAA Tournament

SBU CONTINUED FROM A8

From there, he had to find something else to do, and his coach found just the sport for him.

"Here, I found my first coach," Crisci said. "He brought me to track at 13 years old, and from there, I started and accomplished (the) Italian Championship (and) European Championship, so I was like 'OK, that's a sport that I'm going to do my whole life.'"

Redshirt freshman Reece Smith took first in the men's 1,500 with a time of 3:51.94, while the men's 4x100 relay team, consisting of freshman Enrico Cavagna, freshman Joel Dos Santos, redshirt freshman Prince Griffin and senior Marcus Klein, took first with an NCAA provisional qualifying time of 41.01.

"They performed at a high level," Masters said. "They had a lot of event wins and quite a few (personal records) — it was a great day."

While the men's team performed well, Masters said there were only a couple MIAA teams there and doesn't think this first-place finish suddenly makes them a top-two MIAA team. But he does think it reveals just how tough the conference really is.

Masters added that while the men did do a great job, they don't have the depth right now compared to the women, who seem to be stronger overall as a team.

Sophomores Bailey Blake and Kaylee Harp finished first and second, respectively, in the women's 800. Blake won the race with a time of 2:12.56, while Harp came in a close second at 2:12.69.

The women's 4x100 relay team, consisting of junior Randi Overkamp, sophomore Ally Hammond, sophomore Lexie Gilbert and sophomore Kyah Luhring, took second with a time of 46.95.

The women's 4x400 relay team, consisting of freshman Chloe Saenz, freshman Jaedy Commins, Blake and Harp, took second with a time of 3:51.71.

"We're in a good place," Masters said. "We had a great competition this weekend. I saw a lot of what I needed to see. We are actually off this weekend, which is a nice segment — a 10-day segment of training and work that we needed that we can heal up a little bit. We have some tweaks that will go away when we next compete."

The Bearcats' next meet will take place in the Golden State, where they will be competing in the Bryan Clay Invite April 13-15 in Azusa, California, and April 16 in the Beach Invitational in Long Beach, California.

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NW softball looks to flip script on road skid in return to Maryville

JADEN FERGUSON
Missourian Reporter | @NWMSports

After a lengthy road trip, Northwest softball is ready to step off the bus and look to snap a nine-game losing streak at home when the Bearcats host a pair of doubleheaders against Northeastern State and Rogers State April 8 and 9.

"These guys play so much better at home; it gives them something to fight for, defending our home, our field," Northwest first-year coach Naomi Tellez said. "Travel takes a grind on your body and, hopefully, we are well rested and attack these home games."

The Bearcats (6-29) second-to-last travel weekend of the year did not go as planned, as they were held scoreless by Emporia State (18-18) on April Fools' Day, losing both games one and two 8-0. The 'Cats struggled at the plate, only having 11 hits on the day.

Northwest was handed another pair of losses to Washburn (28-11) April 2, losing the first game 9-1. The Bearcats' only run came in the top of the third inning off freshman infielder Skylar Pieper's single to right field, allowing junior infielder Hannah Blackford to round third base and slide home.

"I think we were just overthinking everything at the plate. We don't do the greatest with lower velocity and movement, and we had to adjust quickly in there," Tellez said.

The offensive drought seemed to disappear in the second matchup, and the Bearcats were striking on all cylinders during the first three innings.

Junior outfielder Brylee Kemper doubled to right field in the top of the second, paving the way for junior infielder Aubrey Griffith and Blackford to make their way to home. Sophomore utility Lauren Gray had a home run over the right-field wall in the top of the third inning, but the Ichabods still led 8-3.

"Toward the end, we started squaring balls up," Tellez said. "We started to get big hits and have big moments, so we are trending upwards."

.264

is Northwest's batting average in away games

Despite holding the Ichabods scoreless from the bottom of the third inning to the sixth, the Bearcats' shower of runs would halt, except for an unearned run from Blackford in the top of the sixth, allowing the Ichabods to sweep the Bearcats.

"I mean, we are just kind of flushing (the weekend) and moving on," junior utility Jacee Winn said. "I think that is what we are all wanting to do."

After going 0-8 on the road, Northwest is ready for the home field advantage against some of the MIAA's top competitors.

"I am a firm believer in doing what we do really, really well. If we can prepare ourselves, whether it's being solid on defense, helping our pitching keep the ball in the park, limiting free bases or our offense, we will eventually come around," Tellez said.

Northwest will open its home weekend with a doubleheader against Northeastern State (19-16) at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. April 8. The 'Cats will turn around to face No. 3 Rogers State (31-3), which is undefeated in conference play, at noon and 2 p.m. April 9.

"They love saying that this is our field, and you can't take anything from us. We always come out with a chip on our shoulder being in front of our home fans. They really take pride in playing at home," Tellez said.

Baseball wins four of five to end homestand

LANDEN CRABTREE
Missourian Reporter | @NWMSports

After making its way through a grueling stretch of the schedule, Northwest baseball has started to find its groove by ending a nine-game home stretch with seven wins.

The Bearcats put the punctuation on their latest homestand with a doubleheader victory over Rockhurst April 5 at the Bearcat Baseball Field.

Roughly 24 hours before the 'Cats nabbed 13-7 and 10-8 wins over the Hawks, they were able to keep their hot streak afloat with a pair of wins over MIAA foe Newman. They only added to it Tuesday afternoon, when the bats exploded and a late-game comeback fell short.

In the first game, Northwest was aided by a big third inning. The Bearcats were facing a 4-3 deficit when they hit a pair of three-run home runs en route to a seven-run inning. Freshman infielder Jake Emhardt put a ball over the right-field wall, and senior center fielder Donovan Warren followed with a two-out blast of his own.

That wasn't an oddity from Donovan as of late. He's flourished throughout the home stretch, hitting 11-for-34 (.309) with four home runs and 18 RBIs.

"I was able to stay patient at the plate, waiting for my pitch and putting a good swing on it once it came to create some damage," Warren said.

His performance was em-



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | PHOTO EDITOR

Senior outfielder Donovan Warren follows through his swing after making contact with the ball during the Bearcats' 10-8 win over Rockhurst April 5. Warren is batting .325 on the season.

blematic of everything the Bearcats were throughout the first game, which featured them scoring 13 runs on a mere 11 hits to help make sophomore pitcher Joshua Mitchell 2-0 this season.

Mitchell entered the contest in the fourth and didn't allow a single hit while striking out a single batter, and that personified everything Northwest was in the latter game of the doubleheader.

Standing on the mound amid

a downpour in the top of the seventh inning during the nightcap, sophomore pitcher Jacob Gajic got out of a bases-loaded situation to get his fourth save of the year and put the finishing touches on the homestand.

The Bearcats were quick to show they were ready, too, scoring three runs in the first inning and carrying that momentum the rest of the way. Freshman utility Ryan Williams pelted a two-run home

run in the bottom of the third to give Northwest a 5-3 lead.

And clinging to the eventual 10-8 lead that held true, Gajic dealt a game-ending strikeout, one that helped Northwest avoid a catastrophic collapse.

Gajic's fourth save of the season clinched the Bearcats' fifth win in their last six games, a streak that started with a 7-0 win over MIAA foe Washburn March 29.

"Anytime you can get a win in a three-game series, it's a good weekend inside this conference," Northwest coach Darin Loe said about his team winning two of three against Northeastern State. "Got great starting pitching throughout the weekend and had great at-bats in game two."

Now, the 'Cats will hit the road for the first time since March 22 for a three-game series against MIAA rival Missouri Western April 8-10 in St. Joseph.

Junior ace Max Spitzmiller will get the start for Northwest in the first matchup with the Griffons (6-24). He's looking to build on his 4-5 record while giving the Bearcats their first road win against Western since April 11, 2018.

"Winning four out of the last five is good — a lot of energy and momentum to roll with heading into this weekend," Spitzmiller said. "Gonna try and fill the strike zone and let my hitters continue to do their job and have a good day. Hopefully, we'll continue to win."

Boys place 2nd, women 10th at Smithville Invite

CORBIN SMITH
Sports Reporter | @curly_corbs

The Smithville Invitational served, in some ways, as a competitive awakening for Maryville track and field. After 163 miles of travel, the Spoofhounds returned with a second-place finish for the boys and a 10th-place finish for the girls.

"It was quite a bit more competitive than I kind of thought going into it," coach Rodney Bade said. "It's very competitive — more competitive than it's been in the past. So, if you look at us compared to that level of competition, we might not have looked amazing on Friday, but we have to kind of keep that in perspective."

Despite the boys team's 89-point runner-up performance, and beating Lawson for the first time out of the three meets so far this year, Bade was referencing the girls team and boys sprints.

The girls amassed 38.5 points with the help of standout performances from sophomore Ella Schulte. Schulte hurdled her way to a 14-point performance with a win in the 100-meter hurdles and fifth-place finish in the 300-meter hurdles. She ran the shorter of the two events in a personal record time of 17.31 and finished fifth in the longer with a time of 51.72.

"It feels pretty good," Schulte said about scoring for the girls. "Moving forward into the later season, I'm looking forward to being able to go out of districts and just try and help my team earn points to get their success as well."

Steps are one of the most important aspects in hurdling. For Schulte, who has competed in hurdle events for two seasons prior to this one, her ability to comfortably take three steps in between hurdles is something she's been working on perfecting. Although she can three-step the first five hurdles in a race, she switches to a four-step rhythm that adds time to her race.

"Well, I think (confidence) definitely helped this year," Schulte said. "Some of the struggles that I have right now is only being able to three-step so many hurdles. Hope-



SILVIA ALBERTI | PHOTOGRAPHER

A Maryville High School student sprints in the Spoofhounds' home meet at the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse.

fully by conference or districts, I'll be able to three-step more than I've been able to."

Bade acknowledged Schulte's dedication to the sport and appreciates her rise to score points for her team.

Junior Jesus Flores-Hernandez is the epitome of versatility for the 'Hounds. In any meet, an athlete is permitted to enter a maximum of four events. So far, Flores-Hernandez maxed out in each meet, and they've all been different combinations of events.

This meet, the Swiss Army knife-like athlete tallied 18 individual points for the 'Hounds. He finished sixth in the 300 hurdles with a personal best time of 42.25, fourth in the 200 with a personal best time of 23.87 and ended his meet with a victory in the high jump with a jump of 6 feet, 3/4 inch. He was also part of the 4x200 meter relay that finished ninth with a time of 1:38.54.

Bade said Flores-Hernandez is able to handle the workload better than he realizes. However, expressing his worries to Bade is his way of mentally preparing for each event.

"He went through all the motions," Bade said. "It just shows his strength, I guess, and his depth."

Maryville will return to action April 8 in the Chillicothe Invitational. The girls finished third behind MEC rivals Chillicothe and Cameron at this meet last season, while the boys finished 12th in the overall standings.

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ADDALYNN BRADBURY PHOTO EDITOR

Northwest men's basketball coach Ben McCollum swings the net in the aftermath of the Bearcats' 67-58 win over Augusta in the National Championship March 26 at the Ford Center in Evansville, Indiana. McCollum has won a record-setting five NABC Division II Coach of the Year awards.

Basketball trio weighs in on future

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @ByJonWalker

Mid the annual whirlwind of speculation, at this time, Ben McCollum is planning to remain in Maryville for his 14th season at the helm of the Northwest men's basketball program, he told The Missourian on Tuesday afternoon.

That plan could change with college basketball's coaching carousel in full swing, but for the time being, McCollum isn't going anywhere until a "can't-turn-down" opportunity presents itself.

"I don't have another job, do I?" McCollum said through a laugh. "I've got a job right here."

McCollum has been at the forefront of the last few coaching cycles, with people around the country vying for a Division I program to take a chance on the Storm Lake, Iowa, native.

Fresh on the heels of an unprecedented third-straight national title, and for the last couple of years, McCollum has made everyone aware that it'd have to be a "can't-turn-down" opportunity that would put the punctuation on his time at Northwest.

McCollum has won a record-setting five NABC Division II Coach of the Year awards, won 80.1% of his games (334-83) and has led the Bearcats to four of the last five national titles. He's been a finalist for multi-

ple Division I jobs, including Milwaukee during this cycle, Jeff Goodman from Stadium reported March 8.

So, what's the thing that keeps him anchored in Maryville? What exactly would that can't-turn-down job look like?

"We've got something special here, where we've got great community support and campus life," McCollum said. "It feels like you're growing — obviously, the academics make you grow, but most importantly, you grow from the social aspect of being in college. You also grow from the community support in a college town."

SEE DECISIONS | A6

MHS girls soccer falls to Chicks in quarterfinal rematch

WESLEY MILLER
Asst. Sports Editor | @wesleymiller360

The rain, seemingly a torrential downpour compared to the dry Tuesday morning, fell down onto the field at the Hound Pound. In the middle of the rain, Maryville girls soccer battled for a shot of revenge against Pleasant Hill — a chance to avenge last year's season-ending loss to the Chicks in the Class 2 quarterfinals.

The rain had been steadily falling all day, but that wasn't much of a concern for the players.

"I like these games; they're pretty fun to play in," Maryville junior goalkeeper Abby Swink said. "The e

2

goals were scored by Maryville junior forward Kennedy Kurz

tied, the Chicks managed to push the ball down the field and into Spoofhounds' territory.

After some back-and-forth kicks between the two squads, the ball found its way into the net with 2:44 left before the break.

"We had a few girls playing in positions that they hadn't

SEE HOUNDS | A6

Men shine to nab 1st at SBU Invite, women take 6th place

DAVID DERKS
Missourian Reporter | @NWMSports

Northwest track and field sophomore Blake Morgan prepared his jump like he does every week, and as he readied to clear the bar in front of him, his muscle memory took him through the process of something he's done a thousand times before.

But this time, Morgan didn't finish his jump on the mat — he finished it on the ground.

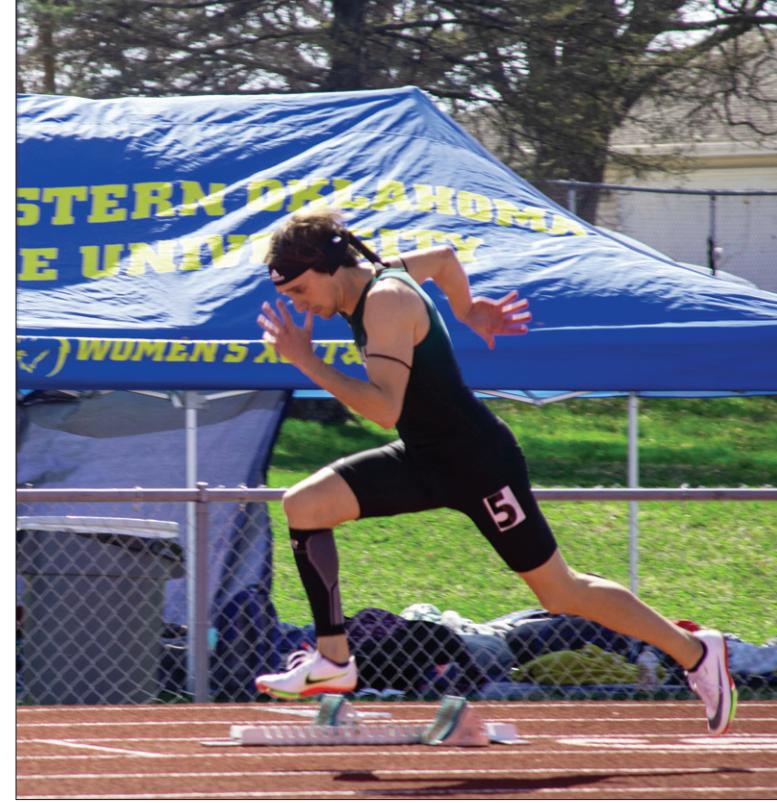
"Unfortunately, Southwest Baptist had the smallest mat that I've ever seen in high jump," coach Brandon Masters said.

Morgan said the mat that usually catches him after his jump is bigger than what he landed on at the SBU Bearcat Invite April 2, and because of that, he overshot the mat, landed on his foot and sprained his toe. However, after a quick assessment, Morgan told Masters he was going to finish the day.

Fighting through the injured toe, Morgan went on to set a personal record in high jump, helping the men's team finish first place in Bolivar, Missouri.

"I was just focused on making the next bar," Morgan said after deciding to continue jumping. "I ended up jumping the next bar on the first attempt."

From there, Morgan had al-



CORBIN SMITH OPINION EDITOR

Junior Federico Crisci pushes around the curve at the SBU Bearcat Invite April 2. Crisci ran a new collegiate-best time of 48.57 to win the 400-meter dash. Crisci led all Northwest scorers with 20 points.

ready won the high jump title, so he said he decided to raise the bar and shoot for an NCAA provisional mark.

He got just that, contributing to the men's 91 total points on the day, with a mark of 2.11 meters (6 feet, 9 inches).

"He's got a pretty banged up toe right now," Masters said. "But it is on his right leg, which is fantastic because that's his nonjumping leg, so he's in a boot right now. We're trying to get swelling down, and we're trying to get him back in a couple weeks, but he's tough."

Junior Federico Crisci also had a great day, taking first in the 400-meter dash (48 seconds

and 57 milliseconds) and running second in the 4x400-meter relay (3:17.05), which also topped the podium to add 20 points to the men's total.

"It felt really good, honestly," Crisci said. "It was my first time — my whole life I've never ran that fast. It was a little cold, so with the weather... I think it was a very good time."

Crisci didn't grow up competing in track and field. His first sport was tennis until a growing back problem started to affect his game, and — at the suggestion of a doctor — he quit playing the sport at the age of 13.

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